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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1672  
INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 1630  
RUEHHE/AMEMBASSY HELSINKI PRIORITY 0278  
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY 2119  
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL PRIORITY 7694  
RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA PRIORITY 6046  
RUEHNH/AMCONSUL NAHA PRIORITY 8439  
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE PRIORITY 9715  
RUEHKSO/AMCONSUL SAPPORO PRIORITY 6649  
RUEHSH/AMCONSUL SHENYANG PRIORITY 0594  
RHMFISS/USFJ PRIORITY  
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY  
RHMFISS/COMUSKOREA SEOUL KOR PRIORITY  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TOKYO 000366

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/12/2016

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [JA](#) [RU](#)

SUBJECT: JAPAN PROTESTS INCURSION BY RUSSIAN BOMBER

REF: TOKYO 00328

Classified By: DCM Joseph R. Donovan. Reasons 1.4 (B) (D)

11. (C) Summary. Foreign Minister Masahiko Koumura delivered a "severe protest" to Russian authorities over the February 9 incursion by a Russian Tu-95 strategic "Bear" bomber into Japanese airspace, Foreign Ministry officials tell Embassy Tokyo. Tokyo officials provided Moscow with coordinates showing the Russian aircraft's track through Japanese airspace and asked that Russian authorities "examine the facts." Russian Embassy diplomats confirm receiving a "strong protest" over the incident, adding that First Deputy Premier Sergey Ivanov has promised to "check the information once again." Japanese officials expressed little concern about how the incident might affect possible Moscow visits by Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda and Foreign Minister Koumura. End Summary.

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Japan Protests  
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12. (C) On February 12, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Russia Division Principal Deputy Director Kotaro Otsuki told Embassy Tokyo that Japan delivered a "severe protest" to Russian authorities over the February 9 incursion by a Russian Tu-95 strategic "Bear" bomber into Japanese airspace. Otsuki, confirming numerous front-page and international media reports on the incident, noted that the Russian plane crossed over the uninhabited Sofugan isle about 400 miles south of Tokyo at 0730 for approximately three minutes.

13. (C) Otsuki said that Russia Division Director Akira Muto delivered the protest to Russian Embassy Political Counselor Andre Kostin on February 9. Muto provided Kostin with coordinates showing the Russian aircraft's track through Japanese airspace, and asked that Russian authorities "examine the facts." The Russian Embassy promised to relay Japan's protest to Moscow, but did not comment on the incident, according to Otsuki. He noted that coordinates demonstrating the bomber's transit over Japanese territory

appears on the Ministry of Defense's Web site.

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Koumura Meets Ivanov  
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¶4. (C) Foreign Minister Masahiko Koumura also raised the issue with Russian First Deputy Premier Sergey Ivanov during a meeting that same day in Munich, Otsuki observed. Ivanov reportedly countered that Moscow officials had looked into the incident and determined that no incursion took place. Koumura, claiming that Japanese Self-Defense Force pilots had sighted the bombers, asked Ivanov to "check again," which the Deputy Premier promised to do. Otsuki said that Tokyo will wait for Moscow to re-examine the facts before deciding on additional steps. Muto, who had already been scheduled to visit Moscow on unrelated business, will follow-up with Russian Foreign Ministry officials, Otsuki said.

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Fukuda, Koumura Visits  
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¶5. (C) Otsuki expressed little concern about the effect the incident might have on Foreign Minister Koumura's possible March visit to Russia (reftel), noting that Tokyo and Moscow had not yet confirmed the visit would occur. Similarly, Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda had not yet decided whether to undertake a "Golden Week" (April 29 - May 6) trip to Europe, with a possible stop in Moscow, Otsuki observed.

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Russians Re-Checking  
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¶6. (C) Russian Embassy First Secretary Yurii Yuriev confirmed that his mission received a "strong protest" over the alleged incursion, which it then passed on to Moscow. Yuriev, while declining to confirm or deny the event, acknowledged that Ivanov, "after initially denying that the aircraft had entered into Japanese airspace," promised Koumura to "check the information once again."  
SCHIEFFER